

**The President.** That's good, probably. They get a little wiggly. [*Laughter*] Afraid the President would go on too long, like the State of the Union. [*Laughter*]

Listen, I've enjoyed this. I want to thank our panelists. All of us who have been fortunate enough to serve our country have a duty to confront problems and to debate in an open and honest way, be inclusive in our discussions, to welcome interesting ideas. This is a significant problem that we've got to deal with now. And I intend to keep reminding Congress about our duty. I intend to keep traveling our country, talking to the American people, reminding them they have a chance to influence the debate. And I'll keep calling upon the best spirit of those of us in public service to put our politics aside and to leave our generations to come better off with a security system that works.

We're headed toward peace in the world, more freedom at home. And that makes a guy feel pretty darn good, who's lucky to be your President.

God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. at the Robinson Center Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine; and Janet Norwood, mother of Sgt. Byron Norwood, USMC, who was killed in Iraq on November 13, 2004, and Iraqi citizen and political activist Safia Taleb al-Suhail, both of whom were guests of the First Lady at the President's State of the Union Address on February 2.

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### Digest of Other White House Announcements

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The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

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#### January 29

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

#### January 30

In the afternoon, the President had separate telephone conversations with King Abdullah II of Jordan, Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt to discuss the elections in Iraq.

Later in the afternoon, in the Family Theater, the President participated in a speech preparation session for his February 2 State of the Union Address.

#### January 31

In the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom, President Jacques Chirac of France, and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany to discuss the elections in Iraq, the situation in the Middle East, and the President's upcoming visit to Europe.

Later in the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Ayad Allawi and President Ghazi al-Ujayl al-Yawr of the Iraqi Interim Government to discuss the elections in Iraq. He then had an intelligence briefing and met with the National Security Council.

In the afternoon, in the Family Theater, the President participated in two speech preparation sessions.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations to discuss the elections in Iraq.

The President announced that he has named Jack D. Crouch II as Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Adviser.

#### February 1

In the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Vladimir Putin of Russia, Secretary General Jakob Gijsbert "Jaap" de Hoop Scheffer of NATO, and European Union Commission President Jose Manuel Durao Barroso to discuss the elections in Iraq. Later, he had a telephone conversation with President Vicente Fox of Mexico to discuss the elections in Iraq and other issues.

Later in the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Family

Theater, he participated in a speech preparation session.

In the afternoon, the President met with Representative Jo Ann Emerson, chair, National Prayer Breakfast. He then participated in an interview with columnist Cal Thomas. Later, in the Family Theater, he participated in a speech preparation session.

### **February 2**

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy to discuss the elections in Iraq, the President's upcoming visit to Europe, and other issues. He then had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Paul Martin of Canada to discuss the elections in Iraq. Later, he had a telephone conversation with President Elias Antonio Saca of El Salvador to discuss the elections in Iraq and to thank President Saca for the service of Salvadoran troops in Iraq.

Later in the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He then had separate meetings with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld. Later, in the Family Theater, he participated in a speech preparation session.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with network television correspondents.

The President declared a major disaster in Hawaii and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flash flooding on October 30, 2004.

The President declared an emergency in Illinois and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by record/near record snow on December 21–23, 2004.

The President declared a major disaster in West Virginia and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, and landslides beginning on January 4 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Utah and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on January 8–12.

### **February 3**

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan to discuss the elections in Iraq, the situation in North Korea, and other issues. He then had an intelligence briefing.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Fargo, ND, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Fran Rickers.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Great Falls, MT, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteers Char and Roy Brady.

In the evening, the President traveled to Omaha, NE.

Also in the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister John Howard of Australia to discuss the elections in Iraq, relief efforts following the December 26, 2004, earthquake and tsunamis in the Indian Ocean, and other issues.

### **February 4**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had separate telephone conversations with President Traian Basescu of Romania and Prime Minister Simeon Saxe-Coburg-Gotha of Bulgaria to discuss the elections in Iraq.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Little Rock, AR, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Katya Lyzhina.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Tampa, FL, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Margaret Goodson.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Brig. Gen. William T. Grisoli, USA, to be a Commissioner of the Mississippi River Commission.

The President announced his intention to designate Christopher Bancroft Burnham as Acting Under Secretary of State for Management.

The President announced his designation of the following individuals as members of the Presidential delegation to attend the state funeral of Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania of

Georgia on February 6: Senator Richard G. Lugar (head of delegation); Richard J. Miles; Paul V. Applegarth; and Lorne W. Craner.

The President announced his designation of former Presidents George Bush and William J. Clinton as members of the Presidential delegation to visit tsunami-affected countries of South and Southeast Asia including Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Maldives on February 19–21.

The President declared a major disaster in California and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, debris flows, and mudslides on December 27, 2004, through January 11, 2005.

Transcript: Interview of the First Lady by ABC News

Transcript: Interview of the First Lady by CBS News

Transcript: Interview of the First Lady by NBC News

### ***Released February 2***

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing the appointment of Elliott Abrams as Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Adviser for Global Democracy Strategy, and that Faryar Shirzad will continue to serve in an expanded role as Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economic Affairs

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Hawaii

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Illinois

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to West Virginia

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Utah

Fact sheet: Ensuring Justice and Fairness for All Americans

Fact sheet: Helping America's Youth

Fact sheet: The State of the Union

Excerpts: State of the Union

Advance text: State of the Union

Policy Book: Strengthening Social Security for the 21st Century

### ***Released February 3***

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Fact sheet: Setting the Record Straight: Participants Get 100% of Their Personal Retirement Accounts, Both Principal and Interest

### ***Released February 4***

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

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## **Nominations Submitted to the Senate**

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The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

### ***Submitted January 31***

Michael Chertoff,  
of New Jersey, to be Secretary of Homeland Security, vice Thomas J. Ridge, resigned.

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## **Checklist of White House Press Releases**

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The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

### ***Released January 31***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

### ***Released February 1***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan